

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 139668
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO OAU COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 139668

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT LIBREVILLE 1316 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO
ABIDJAN DAKAR CAIRO RABAT LOME BANGUI MAPUTO LAGOS DAR ES
SALAAM YAOUNDE GABORONE NAIROBI LUSAKA KHARTOUM NOUAKCHOTT
PARIS BRUSSELS LONDON BONN ROME LISBON THE HAGUE OTTAWA
MOSCOW JUN 01.
QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 1316

EXDIS

DEPT PASS TO OAU COLLECTIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, MOPS, EFIN, EAID, CG, FR, BE

SUBJ: CONSULTATIONS ON RECOVERY EFFORT FOR ZAIRE

REF: STATE 137343

1. INASMUCH AS BONGO HAS BEEN QUOTED HERE PUBLICLY
TWICE AS SAYING IN PARIS HE FAVORED CREATION OF FRANCO-
PHONE FORCE TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS SUCH AS SHABA, IT
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WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR BONGO NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH AN
UNDERTAKING IF OTHER COULD BE COUNTED IN AS WELL (INDEED,
GISCARD MAY HAVE PUT HIM UP TO IT TO ENSURE THAT IDEA
WAS FIRST BROACHED PUBLICLY BY AN AFRICAN CHIEF OF STATE).

2. EXTENT OF PARTICIPATION IS SOMETHING OF DIFFERENT
MATTER. TOTAL GABONESE MILITARY STRENGTH INCLUDING ARMY,

NAVY, AIR FORCE, GENDARMERIE AND PRESIDENTIAL GUARD PROBABLY NOT MORE THAN 4200. OF THESE, PRESIDENTIAL GUARD IS CONSIDERED BEST TRAINED AND EQUIPMENT, BUT BECAUSE OF THEIR PRIMARY FUNCTION, LEAST LIKELY TO BE COMMITTED UNLESS FRENCH HAVE ASSURED BONGO THAT RESIDENT FRENCH TROOPS WOULD ASSURE HIS SECURITY. IN ANY CASE, WHETHER THESE OR OTHER TROOPS WERE COMMITTED, WE WOULD EXPECT GABON'S TROOP PARTICIPATION TO BE AS SMALL AS POSSIBLE, PERHAPS NO MORE THAN 300 MEN AND MORE LIKELY, SOMETHING LESS. (BONGO MIGHT OFFER SOME AIR SUPPORT, I.E., C-130S AND FOUGA MAGISTARS.) BONGO, INCIDENTALLY, DID LIMIT GABONESE PARTICIPATION IN FRANCOPHONE FORCE DURING SECOND PUBLIC STATEMENT TO MATERIAL, BUT WE THINK HE WOULD HAVE HARD TIME SQUIRMING OUT FROM UNDER HIS ORIGINAL STATEMENT IF HE WERE ASKED FOR TROOPS, ESPECIALLY IF GISCARD PUT ARM ON HIM.TIENKIN UNQUOTE VANCE

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